SARDOU AND THE SPIRIT.

The Famous French Dramatist Wrote and Drew Pictures While "Under Control."

Before he made his reputation by writing plays Victorien Sardou, the French dramatist, who was deeply interested in spiritualism, had a remarkable experience in taking dictation. He had been interested in occult phenomena, and by chance he came into communication with a spirit personality who signed himself "Bernard Palissy." M. Sardou told the story of his experiments in an article entitled "Only the Blindly Ignorant Scoff" in the Delineator. He said:

One day in my room with two friends I thought I would make the little table where we had taken our coffee run about the room, as I had often done when alone. Without saying anything I put my hand on the table, but it would not budge. I tried in vain all the time they were there to make it move, but to no avail. As soon as they were gone I could make it do what I pleased, even jump clear off the floor. So I took up my pencil and asked, "But why would you not make the table move while my friends were here?" The hand which held the pencil wrote, "They were too stupid."

Shortly after this I was sitting by my table one day idling, dreaming, not making any effort to do anything in particular. All of a sudden my hand began to work on the paper before me with a rapidity and precision which astonished me. And it kept this up for close to two hours. The result was a fantastic piece of work drawn in delicate lines, fine almost as a spider's web, and at the bottom a signature—"Bernard Palissy." "What is it?" I asked.

And my automatic hand wrote, "The house of Swedenborg, on the planet Jupiter." This was considered as most curious by all my friends, who knew that personally I had no aptitude for drawing. A plate was prepared, and I was given an etching tool. The result, in the same order of design, was a mere elaborate piece of work, this time curiously combined out of all sorts of musical terms, clefs, notes, bars, and so on, and the whole was designated as the house of Mozart, also on Jupiter, and the whole was again signed "Palissy." In fact, Bernard Palissy became my almost constant companion from this on, like my second self.

AN UNWASHED PRINCE.

The Lesson That Ended His Kicks About Morning Baths.

When Emperor William II. was a small boy he had a strong objection to being washed in the morning, and his governess, having had some unpleasant experiences with him and being in some doubt as to what she had better do, appealed to his father, the then Crown Prince Frederick. Frederick answered, "The next time he gives any trouble on this score leave him alone to his own pleasure and report to me."

Naturally it was not long before the young prince refused to go through the purification process, and the governess followed the orders received.

Now, the boy had a little carriage and was very fond of driving out in the morning, and he generally ordered the coachman to go by way of the Brandenburg gate, as it amused and flattered him to see the soldiers in the barrack, just inside the gate, turn out and present arms as the heir to the empire passed their quarters. Accordingly on the morning of his disobedience the order was, as usual, "To the Brandenburg gate," and the carriage rolled rapidly thither. But what was the amazement and the rage of the princeling on arriving there to see no soldiers except those on guard, and they took not the slightest notice of him. In a towering passion he ordered the coachman to return to the palace, where, rushing into his father's room, he complained of the indecent behavior of the guard and demanded their condign punishment.

But his father only smiled and said in the gentlest voice: "Fuer unge waschener prinz wird niemals praesentirt" ("An unwashed prince is never saluted").—Harper's Weekly.

A FIRE IN JAPAN.

The Victim Has Other Troubles Besides Loss of Goods, Says American Missionary.

An American missionary living in Japan recently lost his dwelling by fire. He described in an amusing way the polite condolences which his neighbors showered upon him. "We were deluged with visiting cards," he says. "They were forced into our hands by sympathetic inquirers, friends offering aid and tradespeople soliciting orders. The conversation with each comer was somewhat as follows: 'You have indeed had an honorable disaster,' says the friend. 'I have humbly caused a great disturbance,' I reply. 'Please honorably excuse me.' 'Indeed, it is honorably sad for you,' the friend answers. 'I have done an unheard of thing,' I say. 'I am overcome that you should have come to call on me on purpose. Thank you very much.' 'Please honorably excuse me for being so late in coming,' says the friend. The energy required for such a conversation can be imagined by accompanying each sentence with a low bow and repeating, the process about fifty times.

"About 10 o'clock we two foreigners escaped to face our next duty, which consisted in apologizing to all the houses in our section—about fifty. It was nearly 12 o'clock at night when our apology tour was completed, but our last visitor called at 2 o'clock in the morning. Callers began coming again at 6 o'clock and kept on coming steadily. During the day we received many visitors and paid twenty-eight or more calls. The strain of all this, together with our other tasks, including the receiving of the stream of visitors, which lasted a whole week, is better imagined than described.

"All day after the fire and for three days more people from all over Gifu and from out-stations kept bringing sympathy from their families and presents of cakes and fruit and other articles. We can never repay all the kindness we received."—Chicago News.

THE ELBE RIVER.

How the Stream Was Brought to an Even Slope and Current.

In the beginning the Elbe, like any other river, wandered at its will, now spreading out among a multitude of islands, now narrowing into a short and crooked turn, now widening over a shoal. As a proper beginning for the correction of this sort of thing the Prussians, in true German style, prepared a map of the stream as it was, decided by a simple mathematical calculation how wide a channel 1.50 meters deep at middle water could be with the existing flow and then upon the map in red ink, eliminating all sharp turns, drew in graceful curves and long straight reaches regardless of the existing banks two nearly parallel lines, indicating the banks as they were intended to be.

The engineers began at the head of the stream and built out from the old shore to the location of the red line transverse dikes, ground sills—ordinary contraction works. Sometimes where they seemed to be needed they built long parallel dikes exactly on the new red line. Sometimes they wove hurdles and revetment mattresses of willow brush, much as we do at home, and sunk them on bars between the tips of the transverse dikes, and then on the top of them set up upright sticks and wove "wattle" or basket fences of willow through them to make pens, and into these piled sand dredged from the stream, to build up the shore. Mile by mile they advanced, dredging the river or letting it dredge itself, leaving no ends loose to ravel out, gradually reducing the river to an even slope and current.—Boston Transcript.

His Dinner Guests.

In a volume published in London, "Piccadilly to Pall Mall," there is this queer anecdote of the vagaries of social life in the capital: Some years ago an eminent personage accepted or suggested a dinner with a certain millionaire, at that time comparatively unknown. The first guest to arrive, having explained to the butler that, being unacquainted with his host, he would wait till some one else came who could introduce him, lingered in the hall. The second was in the same predicament, as were the third, fourth, fifth and other guests up to the ninth, who chanced to be "the eminent personage" himself. Upon the dilemma being explained to him he cheerfully said: "Oh, come along with me! I will introduce you all. I know him."

Clown Dogs in Demand.

There are dogs and dogs, but not all dogs are fitted for clown work in the circus or a dog and pony show. Clown dogs are a source of great amusement with the children, and when a pup is found which has a keen sense of the ridiculous he is the one for the sawdust ring. Sometimes pups of no particular breed are found which fill the bill for harlequin roles, and the circus man is glad to get them. When a humorous dog is small and agile he is in great demand.—Chicago News.

Practical Proof.

"Yes, my son, I want you to make yourself ambidextrous. I want you to be able to use one hand just as skillfully as you do the other."

"That's me, dad. I can lick any boy in my class with either hand."—New York World.

The Dear Friends.

Vaudeville Dancer—When do you go on? Vaudeville Singer—Right after the trained cats. Vaudeville Dancer—Goodness me! Why don't the manager try to vary the monotony of his acts?—Cleveland Leader.

THE MAN WHO LAUGHS

By the Way He Does It He Gives an Index to His Character.

THE POTENCY OF LAUGHTER.

Shown by the Effective Way in Which Cervantes Smiled Spain's Vain and Foolish Chivalry Away—Men Who Never Laughed and Rarely Smiled.

What an index to character is man's laugh! What surer clew can we have to both his intellect and his temper unless it be that he seldom or never laughs? "Nothing," says Goethe, "is more significant of men's character than what they find laughable." "You know no man," says Tieck, "till you have heard him laugh—till you know when and how he will laugh." "The perception of the ludicrous," says Emerson, "is a pledge of sanity. A rogue alive to the ludicrous is still convertible. If that sense is lost his fellow men can do little for him."

Lavater, the great physiognomist, lays his great stress on the very unequivocal and derisive nature of a laugh as an index of character. If it be free and hearty and occasion a general and light movement in all the features and dimple the cheek and chin, it is an almost infallible evidence of the absence of any great material wickedness of disposition. Caesar mistrusted Cassius because that lean and hungry conspirator rarely, if ever, indulged in laughter. When Horace Walpole was in Paris in 1765 he found that laughing was out of fashion in that gay capital. "Good folks," he writes, "they have no time to laugh. There are God and the king to be pulled down first, and men and women, one and all, are devoutly employed in the demolition."

How often a man fails to betray the tiger that lurks within him until he laughs! Is there nothing significant in the fact recorded by Plutarch of Cato the younger that nothing could make him laugh, that his countenance was scarcely softened even by a smile? Is it not a characteristic trait of the gloomy tyrant, Philip II. of Spain, that he rarely smiled and that he laughed but once in his entire life, and that when he heard of the massacre on St. Bartholomew's day? Is it not a suggestive fact regarding the gloomy, taciturn Wallenstein, the terror of the people, at the sight of whom as he paced through his camp with his lofty figure enveloped in a scarlet mantle and with a red feather in his cap a strange horror took possession of the soldiers, that he was never seen to smile? Can we wonder that the poor little dwarf, Alexander Pope, the cynical satirist, afflicted with asthma and dropsy, tortured with rheumatism, racked with headaches and threatened with cataract, should never have laughed, but only smiled?

It has been said of the greatest of English dramatists, who united with his intense humor an equally intense, piercing insight into the darkest and most fearful depths of human nature, that no heart would have been strong enough to hold the woe of Lear and Othello except that which had the unquenchable elasticity of Falstaff and the "Midsummer Night's Dream."

Might not a similar remark be made of that "pendulum betwixt a smile and a fear," Abraham Lincoln, in whom sadness and a keen sense of the comic were so strikingly combined? How exuberant was his mirth, sparkling in jest, comic story and anecdote, and yet how often the very next moment those sad, pathetic, melancholy eyes showed a man familiar with "sorrows and acquainted with grief!"

Who can doubt that but for the merriment in which he indulged—the contagious laughter which welled up from his soul as naturally as do bubbles in the springs of Saratoga—he would have sunk under his weary weight of care long before he fell by the pistol of Booth?

It is indeed statesmen, students and thinkers generally who most need the relaxation afforded by occasional merriment. Some centuries ago it was the fashion in Europe for men of rank to keep a buffoon, and a banquet was considered incomplete where a privileged jester was not an attendant. This was perhaps for those days a wise custom. It is surprising how much a few minutes' sleep will refresh the body and a few minutes' laughter the mind, and many a useful life might be prolonged by the substitution of these remedies for "carking care" and weariness in place of the usual treacherous tonics and stimulants.

What a dismal deduction would be made from the happiness of our homes if they were robbed of their merriment! What pictures of innocent mirth has Goldsmith given in the "Vicar of Wakefield," and how artless the remark of the good Dr. Primrose. "If he had little wit we had plenty of laughter!"

What a power for good and evil is the world's "dread laugh, which scarce the firm philosopher can scorn!" How many men have been cowed by it who could have faced without flinching a battery's deadly fire! How many bad customs and wicked practices, how many quixotic schemes of philanthropy or reform, how many absurd doctrines in politics, theology and sociology, which have defied the artillery of argument have been "laughed off the public stage," never to return! Did not Cervantes "smile Spain's vain and foolish chivalry away?"—William Mathews in London Great Thoughts.

Ill gotton goods never prosper.—German Proverb.

OBEYED THE DOCTOR.

Did His Best In Keeping a Watch Upon the Patient, but He Practiced Substitution.

The late Dr. Drummond, the habitant poet, once related an amusing anecdote indicative of the simplicity of the rural French Canadian.

He was summering in Megantic county, Que., when, early one evening, he was visited by a young farmer named Ovide Leblanc.

"Bon soir, docteur," said Ovide by way of greeting. "Ma brudder Moise, heem ver' seeck. You come on d'house for see heem, doc?"

Drummond, always kind hearted and obliging, complied with the request of Ovide and found the unfortunate Moise suffering from what he diagnosed as a fairly severe case of typhoid.

"Wishing to provide Moise with some medicine," said the doctor-poet, "I asked Ovide to accompany me back to the village. The prescription compounded, I proceeded to instruct Ovide. The dose was to be administered every three hours during the night, and, trying to be as brief, plain and explicit as possible, I said: 'Be sure and keep watch on Moise tonight and give him a teaspoonful of this at 9 o'clock, 12 o'clock and at 3 and 6 in the morning. Come and see me about 9 o'clock in the morning.'"

Ovide understood and departed. The following morning he again presented himelf, and Drummond asked: "How's Moise? Did you do as I told you?"

"Ma brudder Moise, I t'ink he some better dan las' night," replied Ovide. "I give heem de medecine, but I doan have no watch in d'house, doc. I tak d'leetle clock—d'one what mak d'beeg deesturb for get up. I keep eet on hees ches' all night. T'ink eet do heem good dat, jus' lak d'watch. W'at you t'ink, doc?"—Harper's Weekly.

THE QUEEN BEE.

Her Household Service the Most Perfect In the World.

"We must go to the bee for the real solution of the servant question," said a housewife. "The queen bee's service is the most perfect in the world. Why, she even has servants who digest her food for her.

"The queen bee is so entirely occupied in egg laying—she lays 2,500 eggs, twice her own weight, daily—that all other things must be done for her.

"And so a corps of servants makes her toilet. This corps all day long cleans and brushes and polishes her person. It is as though her life were passed divinely in a beautiful parlor.

"Another corps of servants has charge of the air she breathes. The air must be the purest, that her eggs may be the finest. So, standing in a circle about her, fanning with their wings, these bees make a living ventilating system.

"Her most important servants are perhaps her feeders. Their training may be said to begin before birth, since they must be born, from specially molded eggs, with glands in their heads for the reception of bee milk, the chosen predigested food of the queen. The feeders stand always at attention, presenting, like a brimming cup, their head glands, swollen with predigested food, to the queen bee, busy at her task of laying a dozen eggs a minute."—New Orleans Times-Democrat.

The English Three R's.

We are constantly being misunderstood by the foreigners, says Clarence Rook, and the Frenchman of whom the following story is told contrived to do us something less than justice.

He had been on a visit to this country in order to study at first hand the social manners of the English people.

On returning to his native land he was asked by a friend whether he had discovered the meaning of the mysterious "three R's."

"Oh, I found out what they were on the first day of my visit!" said he.

"And what are they, then?"

"Rippin', rotten and right-o!" replied the triumphant Frenchman.—London Mail.

Had Them Tested.

The loss and recovery of a $6,500 pearl necklace recall the story of a similar experience which a New York woman had after the last Old Guard ball. She also missed her necklace when she arrived at her home, and the next day it was brought to her by a woman who had shared her carriage on her way home. Handing the necklace to her friend, the finder said: "So glad I found it. We always thought they were real."—New York Tribune.

Allaying His Fears.

The New Convict—Say, old man, I'm likely to go stomping around my boudoir at all hours of the night. I'm a sleepwalker. It worries me terribly too. Guard—It needn't in this hotel, for there isn't the sightest danger of your walking out of a window.—Puck.

Their Good Time.

Little Elsie was very disobedient and mother was cross and scolding. Suddenly the little one looked up and said very sweetly, "Oh, mamma, ain't we having a good time!"

"How?" asked the mother crossly.

"Oh, just a-fussing."—Delineator.

A Mechanical Age.

"What has become of the old fashioned mother who sat up to see at what hour her boys got in?"

"I presume she has been superseded by a time clock."—Kansas City Journal.

A common danger produces unanimity.—Latin Proverb.